



PRESS RELEASE

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Wet Weather Prompts Routine Deflation of Rubber Dam

(Santa Rosa, CA) – The Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) today began deflating its rubber dam located in the Russian River near Forestville, CA. SCWA routinely deflates the rubber dam when Russian River flows reach 1,000 cubic feet per second in order to prevent damage to the rubber dam from the high flows. Flows are currently approximately 600 cfs and expected to increase as more rain storms are forecasted to move into the Russian River Watershed later this week. The rubber dam will be completely deflated by Wednesday, December 24. When completely deflated, the rubber dam rests flat on the bottom of the Russian River.

The rubber dam is located just down stream of the Wohler Bridge on the Russian River and is normally raised in the spring when potable water demand increases. The rubber dam raises the water level from which to draw water into the off-stream infiltration ponds. The raised water level enhances SCWA well levels in the area. Permanent fish ladders provide fish passage when the rubber dam is raised. Due to the deflation, SCWA will no longer be able to count the migration of Chinook and steelhead with its underwater video system located in the fish ladders. To date, SCWA has counted 1,125 Chinook, 103 hatchery steelhead and 77 wild steelhead.

Even with the wet weather, SCWA encourages residents, businesses and the agricultural community to continue using less water. Using less water means more for Lake Sonoma and Lake Mendocino, which we rely on for water supply, recreation and habitat for fish. Below are some conservation tips:

- 1) Cut down watering on cool and overcast days and don't water in the rain. Adjust or deactivate automatic sprinklers during the rainy season.
- 2) Don't water the lawn on windy days. There's too much evaporation and that can waste up to 300 gallons in one watering.
- 3) Set lawn mower blades one notch higher. Longer grass means less evaporation. You can save 500 to 1,500 gallons each month.

Additional water conservation tips are available on SCWA's Web site
www.sonomacountywater.org.

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Sonoma County Water Agency provides water supply, flood protection and sanitation services for portions of Sonoma and Marin counties. Visit us on the Web at www.sonomacountywater.org.